

BRANDRAMS HOUSING CO-OPERATIVE GUIDE TO MEMBERSHIP POLICY & PROCEDURES

Last update: Millie P 31/07/17

This guide covers the following:

- Applicant Allocations
- Applicant Interviews
- Applicant Wait List
- Voids (Shared Flats)
- Transfers (Shared Flats)
- Conversions (Shared Flats)
- Probation Tenancy
- Tenant Induction
- Tenant Wait List
- Voids (Single Flats)
- Transfers (Single Flats)
- Allocations (Council Tenants)
- Allocations (Tenant Wait List)
- Joint Tenancies
- House-Sits

APPLICANT ALLOCATIONS			
Brandrams Housing Co-Op offers accommodation in shared flats to individuals who can demonstrate housing need and a proven connection to the London Borough of Southwark.			

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applicants must have lived, worked or studied in the Borough for at least 12 months and be able to demonstrate a need for social housing. Freelancers and part-time workers or students must demonstrate that the majority of their work/study time takes place in the Borough. For proof of residency, applicants must provide TWO of the following: Tenancy Agreement, Council Tax bill, Bank statement or Household bill (excluding mobile phone). One should be recent and one should be from 12 months or more previously. For proof of studying, a signed letter from an educational institution must be provided. For proof of employment, a signed letter from an employer must be provided. Applications cannot be made with partners or any dependents. 			
PROCESS	APP	CHS	BHC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CHS hosts application form online, or posts to applicant on request, which includes details of eligibility and proofs to provide. 	X	-	X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applicant completes application form online, or by post if preferred, with copies of proof of Borough connection as outlined above. 	X	-	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CHS checks applicant is eligible, and has provided proofs, and confirms the results to the applicant in writing within 14 days of application receipt. 	-	X	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CHS reports running total of applicants to BHC Management Committee on a monthly basis. 	-	X	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Directs all applicants to CHS. 	-	-	X

APPLICANT INTERVIEWS			
The interview is to assess the suitability of the eligible applicant to BHC and to ensure they understand the implications of co-op living. At least two members of BHC must be present at all interviews and the results must be reported in writing.			
PROCESS	APP	CHS	BHC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BHC Membership Co-Ordinators to provide CHS with a couple of date options for Interviews. 	-	-	X

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CHS invites successful applicant for interview and provides contact details to the Membership Co-Ordinators 	-	X	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BHC to confirm the results of the Interviews in writing to CHS within 7 days of the Interview and also report to MC at the next meeting. 	-	-	X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CHS will communicate the results of the Interview to the applicant in writing within 7 days of the interview results being confirmed by BHC. All those successful will receive confirmation that they're on the Wait List and notified that they will be contacted when a room becomes available at which point they will need to prove their Borough connection again. 	-	X	-

APPLICANT WAIT LIST			
All successful applicants will remain on the Wait List until they're offered a probationary tenancy at BHC or they request that CHS remove them. CHS will maintain and report on the Wait List to BHC MC in the monthly report. BHC should not let the Wait List drop below twelve minimum to avoid unnecessary delays in filling voids.			
PROCESS	APP	CHS	BHC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CHS to add successful applicants to the Wait List and a summary report will be included as a standing item in the report to BHC MC. 	-	X	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CHS to maintain the Wait List and to provide details to remaining tenants in a shared flat when a void becomes available. 	-	X	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CHS to check the Applicant Wait List annually, every January, to confirm if everyone is still eligible and wants to remain on the list. Any changes to the Wait List numbers to be reported to BHC MC for monitoring. 	-	X	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BHC MC to monitor Wait List to ensure it does not fall below optimum 12-15 applicants. If it falls below this threshold a recruitment plan should be agreed. 	-	-	X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applicants can turn down up to two offers of a tenancy, following a successful void interview, before being removed from the Wait List. 	X	-	-

VOIDS (SHARED FLATS)			
When a room becomes available in a shared flat, the remaining tenants can choose a new tenant from the Applicant Wait List, from a maximum of twelve applicants, or any existing tenants who wish to transfer internally. The new tenant should ideally be confirmed within one calendar month of the end of the outgoing tenancy although exceptions can be made in extenuating circumstances.			
PROCESS	TEN	CHS	BHC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outgoing tenants must give at least one months written notice to quit to CHS and to BHC MC. 	X	-	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CHS to report the void to the BHC Membership Co-Ordinators, and provide the first six applicants on the Applicant Wait List to the remaining tenants along with guidance, within 7 days of receiving notice. 	-	X	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BHC Membership Co-Ordinators to inform Maintenance Co-Ordinators to arrange a void inspection to ascertain any repairs, redecoration and/or recharges according to the Rechargeable Repairs Policy. 	-	-	X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BHC Maintenance Co-Ordinators will ensure there is a working set of spare keys available in the key safe for access and arrange to collect the keys from the outgoing tenant. 	-	-	X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BHC Membership Co-Ordinators will offer assistance with the interviews to the remaining tenants and this is highly recommended if there is only one remaining tenant. 	-	-	X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BHC MC will put a notice up within 14 days of notice being received to inform tenants in shared flats that they should notify CHS if they wish to be considered by the remaining tenants for a transfer interview. 	-	-	X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CHS to notify the remaining tenants of any existing tenants in other shared flats who would also like to be considered for interview although there is no obligation on the part of the remaining tenants to interview them. 	-	X	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The remaining tenants may interview as many of the first six applicants as they choose. They can also request more applicants, as long as there are more than six on the Wait List, to a maximum of twelve. 	X	-	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The remaining tenants must confirm their selected applicant to CHS in writing within one calendar month of the end of the tenancy of the outgoing tenant. 	X	-	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If there are less than six applicants on the Wait List, and the remaining tenants are unable to make a selection they can apply to BHC MC for an extension until there are a minimum of six applicants on the Wait List. Other extenuating circumstances may also considered for granting an extension such as any of the remaining tenants 	X	-	X

suffering ill health or recent bereavement.			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the remaining tenants do not make a selection within a calendar month of the end of the tenancy, and no extension has been agreed, then the Membership Co-Ordinators will arrange for an interview panel to select an applicant within 14 days. The panel will include a Membership Co-Ordinator, one other Co-Op Member, a representative from CHS and any of the remaining tenants that wish to be involved. 	x	x	x
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the successful applicant refuses the offer then the remaining tenants will be given a further 14 days from notification of this to select another applicant from the maximum of twelve applications 	x	-	-

TRANSFERS (SHARED FLATS)			
Tenants in shared flats who have passed their probation are eligible to apply to transfer to other shared flats.			
PROCESS	TEN	CHS	BHC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If two tenants, who have both passed their probationary tenancy period, in separate shared flats want to swap between flats and all other tenants within the two flats are in complete agreement then they should apply to BHC MC in writing for approval. Approval will be based on participation and rent payment histories, as well any ongoing complaints against either tenant, and will not be unreasonably withheld. 	x	-	x
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least two Members, not from either flat, will Interview the other tenants in both shared flats to confirm their agreement. The results will be confirmed to CHS and BHC MC in writing within 7 days. 	-	-	x
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a tenant, who has passed probation, wants to transfer to a shared void then they can notify their interest in writing to CHS for their details to be submitted to the remaining tenants in that flat to decide if they wish to interview them in addition to the Wait List applicants. 	x	x	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CHS to issue updated tenancies as appropriate. 	-	x	-

TRANSFERS (SINGLE FLATS)			
Tenants in single flats are eligible to apply to transfer to a void in a single flat whenever it's been agreed that the void will be allocated to a Southwark Council tenant.			
PROCESS	TEN	CHS	BHC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If BHC MC agrees to allocate a void in a single flat to a Southwark Council tenant then a notice will be displayed within 7 days of the decision so that BHC tenants in single flats can apply to transfer. 	-	-	x
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BHC tenants can apply in writing to BHC MC within 7 days of notification. 	x	-	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BHC MC will request that the Maintenance Co-Ordinators organise an inspection of the applicant's single flat to check if there are any major repairs so that recharges can be agreed ahead of transferring. 	-	-	x
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BHC MC will consider the application to transfer based on the tenant's participation and rent histories as well as any outstanding complaints and recharges. If more than one member applies to transfer then the length of the tenancy will also be a factor and those who have been members longer will take priority. BHC to confirm the outcome to the tenants, and to CHS in writing. 	-	-	x
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the tenant is successful in their application to transfer then their flat will be offered to the Council tenant instead and the original tenancy will be updated as appropriate. 	-	x	-

TENANCY PROBATION			
An offer of a six month probationary tenancy will be made by CHS in writing within 7 days of notification from the remaining tenants in a shared void that they've selected an applicant from the Applicant Wait List. An offer will also be made to any successful applicants to single flats from the Southwark Council allocations.			
PROCESS	TEN	CHS	BHC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CHS to make an offer in writing to a successful applicant within 7 days of receiving notification. 	-	x	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant must accept the offer in writing to CHS within 7 days of receipt and must move in and start making rent payments within one calendar month of acceptance. 	x	x	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CHS will report any new tenants, and their start date, to BHC MC at least 14 days ahead and also in the monthly report. 	-	x	-

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CHS will also liaise with the Membership Co-Ordinators to arrange a time and date for BHC and CHS to meet the tenant for an induction and key handover. 	x	x	x
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CHS to report in the MC report any probationary tenancies due to end at least one calendar month ahead. 	-	x	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CHS to issue share certificate etc as appropriate and also add probationary tenants to the Wait List as appropriate. 	-	x	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BHC MC to review all probationary tenancies in the penultimate month of completion to assess whether a full tenancy should be issued. The tenant's participation, rent and complaint histories will all be considered. BHC MC to confirm in writing to CHS results of the review at least one calendar month ahead of the end of the probationary tenancy so a new tenancy can be issued as appropriate. 	-	-	x

INDUCTIONS			
All new tenants should have an induction with CHS and BHC at the start of their tenancy to cover any associated admin and to provide a guide to co-op living and rules.			
PROCESS	TEN	CHS	BHC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CHS should meet with the new tenant on the first day of the tenancy to handover the keys, tenancy and share certificate. 	x	x	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Membership Co-Ordinators to arrange for two BHC member to be available for an induction meeting. At least one of the BHC Members should not be from the flat share that the tenant is moving into. Whenever possible BHC will be available to meet with the tenant at the same time as CHS on the first day of the tenancy but if not possible then the induction must take place within 14 days of the start of the tenancy. The induction should cover the induction pack and a tour of the communal areas. Induction pack should include: a guide to probationary tenancy, co-op rules and participation policy, guide to meetings and squads, guide to communal spaces, repairs etc, key contacts and handbook. 	x	-	x

TENANT WAIT LIST			
A list of all tenants in shared flats, ordered by the date of their agreement, to be maintained by CHS for the allocation of voids in single flats that are allocated to BHC.			

PROCESS	TEN	CHS	BHC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CHS to add every probationary tenant to the list ordered by the date of their agreement. CHS to maintain the Wait List of BHC tenants in shared flats. CHS to confirm the next person on the list to MC as soon as a void (single flat) becomes available. 	-	x	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tenant can refuse the offer of a single flat and still remain on the top of the list up to a maximum of three times at which point they will move to the bottom of the list. 	X	x	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CHS to update the Wait List whenever a tenant in a shared flat leaves, transfers or refuses an offer of a single flat. 	-	x	-

VOIDS (SINGLE FLATS)			
As soon as notice of a void is received, it must be agreed if the void will be filled by the BHC or Southwark Wait List. See Void Policy (V3).			
PROCESS	TEN	CHS	BHC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outgoing tenants must give at least one calendar month's notice to quit in writing to CHS and the MC of BHC. 	X	-	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CHS to inform the Maintenance Co-ordinators of an upcoming void to arrange a joint void inspection with BHC and CHS. 	-	x	x
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MC to confirm to CHS if the void is to be allocated to a tenant from the BHC Tenant Wait List or from the Southwark Council Wait List. 	-	-	x

VOID ALLOCATIONS (COUNCIL)			
If BHC MC agree that a void in a single flat is allocated to Southwark Council tenant then an interview panel will take place for up to three applicants.			
PROCESS	APP	CHS	BHC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CHS to liaise with Southwark Council to arrange for a maximum of three applicants to be interviewed. CHS to confirm guidance on suitability of candidates to co-op living. CHS to confirm date and time for interview panel within one calendar month of void notification being received. 	-	x	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Membership Co-ordinators to arrange for three BHC members to be available to join the interview panel with one 	X	x	x

CHS representative. Interview to agree if any of the candidates demonstrate understanding of expectations of co-op living and are suitable.			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CHS to convey results of interview panel to Southwark. CHS to offer a probationary tenancy to any successful candidate within 7 days of the panel. 	-	x	-

VOID ALLOCATIONS (TENANTS)			
If BHC MC agree that a void in a single flat is allocated to the Tenant Wait List then CHS will make an offer to the next on the list and repeat until the void is filled.			
PROCESS	TEN	CHS	BHC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MC to review if the next person on the Tenant Wait List should be offered the next void. This will take into account participation levels, rent arrears and any outstanding complaints. MC to notify CHS in writing within 14 days of the notice to quit being received. 	-	-	x
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CHS will be instructed to make the offer. If the member refuses, or does not meeting criteria, then the same process will be repeated until an offer is accepted. 	-	x	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tenant must confirm acceptance in writing within 7 days of the offer. Their new tenancy will transfer to start one calendar month from the date of the offer. 	x	x	-

CONVERSIONS (3/4 BED FLATS)			
Tenants living in four bed or three bed flats can apply to convert one bedroom into an additional communal space when a tenant moves out. All remaining tenants must have passed their probation to apply.			
PROCESS	TEN	CHS	BHC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tenant who has passed probation can apply in writing to BHC MC within 7 days of the outgoing tenant giving notice. 	x	-	-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applications will be considered by BHC MC and the participation, rent histories, as well as any complaints, will be taken into account. MC to confirm their decision to the remaining tenants and to CHS in writing within a calendar month of request. 	-	-	x

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CHS to issue updated instructions for increased rent payments and ensure that the new payments come into affect from the date that the outgoing tenant quits. The flat will revert to a four or three bed if all tenants leave or if future tenants are in agreement to apply for this conversion. 	x	x	-
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JOINT TENANCY			
Tenants in single flats can apply for a partner to live with them as joint tenants. See Joint Tenancy Policy document for further details.			
PROCESS	TEN	CHS	BHC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tenant applies in writing to BHC MC for consideration. The tenant's rent, participation and complaint histories will be taken into account. BHC MC reports results to the tenant and to CHS. 	x	-	x
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CHS to issue updated tenancy documents as appropriate. 	-x	x	-

HOUSE-SITS			
<p>BHC offers all tenants, in single and shared flats, the opportunity to apply take a temporary leave of absence from their flat and arrange for house-sitters to occupy it in their place. House-sits can be for up to one year with a maximum of eighteen months of house-sit per tenant in any five year period although appeals to extend this will be considered by BHC MC under extenuating circumstances. House-sitters do not have any tenancy rights, do not pay rent direct to the co-op and are the responsibility of the tenant. House-sitters cannot apply to the Wait List based on living connection to the Borough whilst living at Brandrams. House-sitters must abide by co-op rules. The remaining tenants must agree to the house-sit and must interview the house-sitter to assess their suitability along with at least one other member of the co-op.</p> <p>Documents: House-Sit Checklist, House-Sit Application Form (Single/Shared), House-Sit Welcome and House-Sit Policy.</p>			
PROCESS	TEN	CHS	BHC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tenant should submit an application form to BHC MC who will take their participation, rent and complaint history into consideration. BHC MC will confirm the results in writing to the tenant, and CHS, within one calendar month of the application. 	x	-	x
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the tenant applying is in a shared flat then they should arrange for the remaining tenants to meet the proposed 	x	-	-

house-sitter.			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the tenant applying is in a shared flat then the Membership Co-ordinators will arrange to interview the remaining tenants to confirm that they are happy with the house-sit. They must also complete and return a form confirming their agreement to CHS before the house-sit can commence. 	-	-	X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BHC to arrange an induction meeting for the house-sitter, preferably in the flat they're moving into, with at least one Member from another flat to be present. The induction meeting will run through the rules of the co-op and a tour of the communal areas etc. 	-	-	X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CHS to report on house-sits in the regular report to BHC MC and flag when any are coming to an end. 	-	X	-